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Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace page 1, line 10 through line 15, as follows:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the invention

The present invention deals with a solid triglyceride fat which is suited to be used as a hardstock fat for the preparation of emulsion spreads and with a process for the preparation of such fat.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please replace line 20, with the following:

The related art

Description of Related Art

Please replace Page 4, lines 9-20 with the following:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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We have found a fat as defined in claim 1 which fat possesses unique properties for use as fat phase in the manufacture of low fat spreads. The fat comprising a mixture of triglycerides, characterised in that

- 2.5 to 5.5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHH triglycerides,
- 25 to 65 wt.%, preferably 25 to 55 wt.% of the HHH triglycerides are monoacid triglycerides and the remaining HHH triglycerides are composed of mixed fatty acid residues,
- 1.5 to 5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHM and HMH triglycerides,
- at least 85 wt.% of the fatty acid residues H in HHM and HMH are palmitic acid residues,

where H denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths larger than 15 carbon atoms and M denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths of either 12 or 14 carbon atoms and where the M-residue is placed either in the middle or in one of the terminal positions.

The fat can be easily prepared by merely admixing to a triglyceride oil two fats A and B each with a specific triglyceride composition in a ratio chosen from a specific range as specified in claim 2 as follows: incorporating in a triglyceride oil a fat A and a fat B where the fat A and the fat B together amount to 6-15 wt.% of the fat and the A/B weight ratio is in the range 1/9 to 4/6,

characterized in that of fat A

- at least 50 wt.% of the triglycerides are fully saturated
- at least 80 wt.% of the constituting saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 16 carbon atoms (P) or 18 carbon atoms (S), the ratio P:S being in the range 75:25 - 25:75,
- up to 5 wt.% of the saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 12 or 14 carbon atoms

and in that of fat B

- at least 20 wt.%, preferably at least 25 wt.% of the triglycerides consist of HHM and HMH triglycerides where H denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths larger than 15 carbon atoms and M denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths of either 12 or 14 carbon atoms and where the

M-residue is placed either in the middle or in one of the terminal positions are as defined in claim 1.

Emulsion spreads in which fat is employed as fat phase surprisingly combine heat stability with good mouthfeel.

Page 4, replace lines 21-33, as follows:

DETAILS OF THE INVENTION
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present fat is characterized by the presence of two types of triglycerides denoted as HHH and H2M (HHM and HMH) which fat shows the found beneficial properties provided the following conditions as specified in claim 1 are fulfilled:

The fat comprises a mixture of triglycerides, characterised in that

- 2.5 to 5.5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHH triglycerides,
 - 25 to 65 wt.%, preferably 25 to 55 wt.% of the HHH triglycerides are monoacid triglycerides and the remaining HHH triglycerides are composed of mixed fatty acid residues,
 - 1.5 to 5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHM and HMH triglycerides,
 - at least 85 wt.% of the fatty acid residues H in HHM and HMH are palmitic acid residues,
- where H denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths larger than 15 carbon atoms and M denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths of either 12 or 14 carbon atoms and where the M-residue is placed either in the middle or in one of the terminal positions.

Such fats preferably are prepared by the following process as specified in claim 2:

incorporating in a triglyceride oil a fat A and a fat B where the fat A and the fat B together amount to 6-15 wt.% of the fat and the A/B weight ratio is in the range 1/9 to 4/6, characterized in that of fat A

- at least 50 wt.% of the triglycerides are fully saturated
- at least 80 wt.% of the constituting saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 16 carbon atoms (P) or 18 carbon atoms (S), the ratio P:S being in the range 75:25 - 25:75,
- up to 5 wt.% of the saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 12 or 14 carbon atoms

and in that of fat B

at least 20 wt.%, preferably at least 25 wt.% of the triglycerides consist of HHM and HMH triglycerides where H denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths larger than 15 carbon atoms and M denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths of either 12 or 14 carbon atoms and where the M-residue is placed either in the middle or in one of the terminal positions. The process merely consists of blending a triglyceride oil with a fat A and a fat B such that the A/B weight ratio is in the range 1/9 to 4/6.

Please replace the paragraphs extending from page 5, line 19 through page 6, line 15, as follows:

Fat A suitably is fully hydrogenated palm oil. Preferably fat A is prepared without use of hydrogenation. A more natural process relies on interesterification and fractionation. A fat is selected which has a high content of stearic acid (>20 wt.%) and a fat with a high content of palmitic acid (>20 wt.%). Fats with a high content of stearic acid (S) comprise shea fat, Allanblackia fat and the developed high stearic variants of soybean oil, rapeseed oil and sunflower oil. Fats with a high content of palmitic acid (P) comprise palm oil and cottonseed oil. A high stearic fat and a high palmitic fat are blended in such ratio that the blend complies with the P/S ratio of being in the range 75:25 - 25:75. The blend is subjected to interesterification and then to fractionation. The skilled man knows to

choose fractionation conditions so that the collected stearin complies with the specifications of claim 2 following:

- at least 50 wt.% of the triglycerides are fully saturated
- at least 80 wt.% of the constituting saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 16 carbon atoms (P) or 18 carbon atoms (S), the ratio P:S being in the range 75:25 - 25:75,
- up to 5 wt.% of the saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 12 or 14 carbon atoms.

Alternatively, the high S fat and/or the high P fat to be used for the preparation of fat A are first fractionated to increase the respective contents of S and P further. The high S fat and the high P fat are blended and interesterified and, optionally, thereafter fractionated so that the composition of the collected stearic fraction complies with the specifications of claim 2 following:

- at least 50 wt.% of the triglycerides are fully saturated
- at least 80 wt.% of the constituting saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 16 carbon atoms (P) or 18 carbon atoms (S), the ratio P:S being in the range 75:25 - 25:75,
- up to 5 wt.% of the saturated fatty acid residues have a chain length of 12 or 14 carbon atoms.

Either route delivers a fat according to claim 1 possessing a hardstock functionality which is similar to that of fully hydrogenated palm oil.

Please replace page 7, lines 24-30, as follows:

A spread manufacturing process comprises the steps

- emulsifying 50-80 wt.% of an aqueous phase with 20-50 wt.% of a fat phase and

- cooling and working the emulsion to obtain a spreadable emulsion,
characterized in that a fat phase is used according to the present invention as described
in claim 1 as follows: a fat comprising a mixture of triglycerides, characterised in that
2.5 to 5.5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHH triglycerides,
25 to 65 wt.%, preferably 25 to 55 wt.% of the HHH triglycerides are monoacid
triglycerides and the remaining HHH triglycerides are composed of mixed fatty acid
residues,
1.5 to 5 wt.% of the triglycerides are HHM and HMH triglycerides,
at least 85 wt.% of the fatty acid residues H in HHM and HMH are palmitic acid
residues,
where H denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths larger than 15 carbon
atoms and M denotes saturated fatty acid residues having chain lengths of either 12 or 14
carbon atoms and where the M-residue is placed either in the middle or in one of the
terminal positions.